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Room T3.60  
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Dear Kevin

Regeneration Strategy and the National Planning Framework

Thank you for your letter of 16 December 2013 about the Committee's forthcoming consideration of the Proposed National Planning Framework 3 and review of Scottish Planning Policy.

I agree with your view that there are a number of links between regeneration and planning policy. Your letter raised a number of questions in that regard and I attach my response.

You should be aware that because of the crossover in policies these answers have been prepared with the co-operation of officials in the planning team working for Mr Mackay who, as you indicate in your letter, has been asked for an answer on the same questions.

Kind regards

Margaret Burgess

MARGARET BURGESS



Questions on the Delivery of Regeneration in Scotland

1. *What guidance has been given to CPPs in relation to planning for delivering regeneration?*

A. The Scottish Government's 2012 Guidance to Community Planning Partnerships on SOAs emphasises the need to establish a clear understanding of place within community planning. There is a focus on six national policy priorities: economic recovery and growth; employability; early years; outcomes for older people; reducing health inequalities and increasing physical participation and community safety / reduced reoffending. In addition, the guidance steers CPPs towards tackling place-specific, distinctive local priorities in SOAs – this will include planning for delivering regeneration in many community planning areas.

2. *What discussions have, or are, taking place with SLAED, in relation to planning and delivery of regeneration in Scotland?*

A. The Scottish Local Authorities Economic Development group (SLAED) comprises senior officials from economic development teams across all 32 Scottish local authorities. It acts as a joint local authority forum allowing economic development professionals to discuss and co-ordinate, share experience, expertise and best practice on a wide range of economic development issues – including planning and regeneration - relevant to Scotland's local authorities, and the Scottish economy.

Scottish Government Ministers and officials regularly meet with SLAED to discuss a range of economic development issues. For example, SLAED is a member of the Local Economic Development Partnership Forum which was established, in part, as a response to calls from the EET Committee for greater political oversight and alignment between central and local government and key enterprise and delivery agencies involved in local economic development.

The Forum's key objective is to improve the impact of local economic development activity by securing partnership approaches and to ensure alignment. The Forum meets twice yearly and is chaired jointly by the Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Tourism and COSLA's Spokesperson for Development, Economy and Sustainability. Its membership also includes senior officers of key enterprise agencies, Visit Scotland, SDS, and senior representatives from COSLA, Business Gateway, Heads of Planning Scotland and the Scottish Government.

A Senior Officers' Group, of which SLAED is also a member, meets 6 times a year to support discussion at the Partnership Forum. The most recent Senior Officers' Group meeting was held on 10 December and regeneration issues formed part of the discussion.

As an example of further recent engagement with SLAED, the Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Tourism attended the SLAED annual conference on 28 November where a wide range of economic development issues were discussed.



3. *How is SLAED supporting and delivering this agenda?*

A. In partnership with the Improvement Service and SLAED, the Scottish Government has jointly funded the production of an improvement guide for local authority economic development services. Developed in partnership, this guide is supporting local authorities in delivering economic development and regeneration including: tackling market failure; exchanging good practice; assessing overall performance in delivering economic development; benchmarking performance; and identifying practice improvements to strengthen their performance and impact. The Scottish Government is supporting the implementation of this guide alongside the Improvement Service and SLAED.

SLAED sit on the Regeneration Capital Grant Fund Independent Panel and have also acted as key representatives on the review group for the national review of town centres and will continue to advise Scottish Government on views on policy and actions emerging from the Town Centre Action Plan.

SLAED also met with Scottish Government officials early in the NPF3 process, prior to preparation of the Main Issues Report. Their views were used to inform development of the strategy. Discussions focused on achieving a balance between responding to opportunities and addressing need. Ideas included: the need for planning to support regeneration projects (such as Dundee); promoting low carbon opportunities; and improving transport links within, and to, key growth corridors.

4. *What direction have local authorities been given in relation to involving communities in their planning arrangements?*

A. SPP recognises that effective engagement with the public can lead to better plans, better decisions and more satisfactory outcomes and can help to avoid delays in the planning process. It also improves confidence in the fairness of the planning system. The existing policy is clear that the Scottish Government expects engagement with the public to be meaningful and to occur from the earliest stages in the planning process to enable community views to be reflected in development plans and development proposals. A requirement for engagement that is meaningful, early and proportionate is reflected in Draft SPP.

Fuller advice on community engagement in the planning system is provided in Planning Advice Note (PAN) 3/2010: *Community Engagement*. This advises communities on how they can get involved and advice to planning authorities and developers on ways of effectively engaging with communities on planning matters. The PAN also links directly with the **National Standards for Community Engagement** which set out best practice principles for the way that councils and other public bodies should engage with communities.

There is clearly potential for those involved in land use and community planning to work together to provide linked opportunities for engagement. Scottish Government guidance on SOAs also emphasises the importance of community involvement in their development. It notes that CPPs should understand communities and provide genuine opportunities to consult, engage and involve them. Our policy proposals for statutory community planning duties in the forthcoming Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill anticipate that one of the duties to be placed on CPPs should be to consult and engage with communities in identifying and prioritising the outcomes that are to be delivered and ensure that community engagement is properly planned, resourced and integrated across partners.



5. *How is the Government working with planning authorities to ensure that quality design features are at the heart of placemaking?*

A. The current review of SPP has brought placemaking into Draft SPP and set it out as an overarching principal policy that is relevant to all development. This is a positive step which is further strengthened by the emphasis on high quality natural and built environments and placemaking in Proposed NPF3.

The Scottish Government has been working with planning authorities since 2012 on the charrette mainstreaming programme, which aims to increase the level of engagement, design input and quality of outcomes in planning processes. Charrettes bring communities, planning authorities and other stakeholders together with a specialist design team to work together intensively over a short period to develop plans for local areas. The process is specifically focussed on increasing the quality of design by engaging those with detailed local knowledge and specialist design and planning skills together.

Recent charrettes, supported by the Scottish Government, have taken place at an early point in the preparation of local development plans. This allows the outputs of the charrette to have an effective influence over the development of long-term plans and brings the benefits of design thinking into very early planning stages where it may not typically be employed. The charrette mainstreaming programme has recently been expanded to address the issues raised through the national review of town centres. As part of the Scottish Government Town Centre Action Plan, a fund of £120,000 is available in 2013/14 to support local authorities, communities and anyone with an interest in town centre regeneration to deliver charrettes.

